

## **Meeting Minutes, 5/16/07**

### **Committee for Citizen Involvement**

*CCI Members Present: Sue Carver, Basil Christopher, Bev Froude, Cecilia Nguyen, Stacie Yost*

*CCI Members Absent: Rex Caffall*

*CIT for Citizen Involvement Members Present: Linda Palmer, Mike Terrill*

*Staff Present: Ron Bunch, Marissa Daniels, Duane Roberts, and Darren Wyss*

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Basil Christopher called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

Bev pointed out that the "SW Weekly" Oregonian pull-out was misidentified in the April minutes as the "SE Weekly." Basil indicated that he too had some edits, but in the interest of time would email these to Duane sometime after the meeting.

### **3. City-Neighborhood Group IGAs & Website Trials**

Liz introduced this agenda item. She reported that staff have completed a basic webpage design for the Neighborhood Program and handed out a sample homepage based on the newly-developed template. The template includes a cut and paste portion, a comment feature, and link options, such as to TriMet's trip planner, City land use decisions, and Crime Spotter. Each neighborhood group will be able to alter the City-developed template to fit its own taste. Local school news features, neighborhood news, a blog feature using a separate platform, and an information section are examples of feature options.

Liz indicated that she intends to send out an email inviting members of the three pilot neighborhood groups to participate in website design and testing. Three ways are available to participate: through content management, posting management, or web site administration. The goal of the design and testing activity is to provide ample feedback on the workability of the sample webpage. A month-long trial period is planned. Community Connectors are another group she intends to invite to assist in trying-out and evaluating the basic webpage. Liz asked the CCI to review and comment on the usability of the webpage design, as well.

Basil commented that he is not sure what a blog is. Cecilia explained that a blog is a string of comments. According to Liz, the City's newly acquired Blog Spot program will make it easy to create and use a Neighborhood webpage log.

In response to a question, Liz indicated that one of the main purposes of a blog feature would be to allow a neighborhood group to bring comments and complaints to the CCI.

City staff will monitor the blogs. The CCI will be advisory to the Program Manager and Council regarding the overall effectiveness of the blogs.

Liz next handed out a list of proposed rules for the use of the webpage. They include a ban on commercial advertising. Posted information needs to be factual. Government resources and non-commercial social service links will be permitted. The same is true of photographs. Within these broad guidelines, each neighborhood group will be allowed to establish its own policies regarding the number and type of links and the limits on photo postings.

Liz went on to point out that while City content will be provided, the City will not require that it be used in its totality. Content will be voluntary. Each Neighborhood webteam will be free to pick and choose the City-developed stories it wishes to post. Presumably, neighborhood-specific stories, such as stories on important activities occurring in the neighborhood, will be the most used. A neighborhood web administrator will manage each of the webpages, under agreements with the City to manage the site within established limits.

Bev summarized her understanding of Liz's presentation as detailing that the Neighborhood webpages will be set up so that each participating neighborhood can customize its own webpage. Ron elaborated that any posted information must be factual. Opinions might be allowed on blogs that will operate on a separate program.

Cecilia observed that since information must be factual and within the standards or rules established for the websites before it can be posted, disclosure of the information source would be useful in maintaining standards.

Ron commented that many of the opinions given in the blog feature will provide opportunities for City staff to respond. Liz emphasized that staff will not be obligated to respond to comments or opinions. In the case of land use activities, the required Neighborhood Meeting is the primary formal opportunity for residents to weigh in on a development proposal. Bev commented that most residents are unaware of the Neighborhood Meeting requirement.

Liz noted that the next issue of Cityscape will carry a sample Neighborhood webpage. Ron commented that the webpages will provide a good opportunity to build civic capacity. For example, the webpages potentially could be used to educate residents on where and how to participate in civic affairs, such as the need to address approval criteria when speaking on the record during a land use hearing process.

Basil commented that it should not be necessary to establish a lot of rules for website use beyond those related to the basic standards or goals or intent of the website.

#### **4. Policy Interest Team for Citizen Involvement**

Ron introduced this item. Having completed the comprehensive plan background or resource report, staff now is working on the goals and policy element of the plan update. Goals and policies are important because they are the blueprint, or set out the structure for future City decisions.

Put another way, goals and policies set the tone and direction for land use and other activities. Public involvement in the development of these goals and policies is a requirement for meeting state-wide planning goal #1 in the Oregon Revised Statutes. Staff's role in the policy development process is acting as the facilitator or "glue" in providing analysis and information and in synthesizing community input into policy.

Ron overviewed the process for developing comprehensive plan public involvement goals and strategies. The Citizen Involvement Policy Interest Team is one of ten such teams. These are composed of self-selected community members who sign-up to participate in one or more of the topic areas, such as citizen involvement, parks and open space, or transportation. Other key players in the comprehensive plan process are:

- Planning Commission, which is advisory to Council and the focal point of land use planning. It makes recommendations to Council after conducting workshops and public hearings.
- CCI, which coordinates City communications and citizen involvement activities. The Planning Commission looks to the CCI and the Citizen Involvement Policy Interest Team for recommendations pertaining to public involvement policy.
- City Council is the final approval authority in all matters, including the comprehensive plan. It will conduct work sessions and hearings on the comprehensive plan and adopt the comp plan in its final form.
- The fifth part of the wheel is the general public, who generally do not have the time and interest to participate in civic affairs.

As noted, the Citizen Involvement Policy Interest Team is one of ten PIT groups. All ten will gather together for collective discussions, looking at the draft plan policies comprehensively. The adopted policies are obligatory on the City. The City cannot initiate an action contrary to policy, unless another policy supports the action. The public involvement policies need to be adaptable to areas other than land use.

Bev asked how outreach will be accomplished. Ron replied that engaging the public is a problem. The strategy will be to provide as many opportunities as possible. The best we can hope for is to reach 3-4% of the population. The comp plan public involvement process and use of the media will be a building block to future civic engagement.

Basil asked about the degree of anticipated participation, specifically whether the 3-4% is a Metro area-wide average. Liz pointed out that 1% is considered a scientifically valid sample or cross-section of a community.

Marissa gave an update on the outreach effort. Print, cable TV, and a speakers' bureau (with 40-50 meetings scheduled so far) are being used to inform the public. A logo has been developed to brand the effort. Bev recommended adding homeowners associations to the list of organizations to be contacted.

Cecilia asked about the use of high school governance classes. She commented that this is a good resource, provided the students receive academic credit for their work.

Ron talked about the importance of involving youth in the policy process. The fresh perspective youth provide is important.

Darren explained that ten different topic groups have been set up to make public involvement in the comprehensive plan more meaningful and manageable. Stacie asked who is leading the public involvement meetings. Darren replied that staff is doing so.

Marissa noted the need to either set up a joint CCI-Interest Group meeting or to lengthen a regular CCI meeting in order to work on comp plan policies addressing citizen involvement. Ron indicated that it is important not to wear out the CCI. One way of reducing meeting time would be for staff to come up with generic policies that the group could then wordsmith in order to make the policies more specific to Tigard.

Marissa described the proposed “building block” structure being used to develop goals, policies, and action measures in each of the comp plan topic areas. Basil and Bev made positive comments regarding the proposed process. Ron mentioned that the policies developed will be long lasting.

Liz commented on the need to make sure that the proposed information, education, and input efforts affect policy. Meaningful public involvement is involvement that provides an opportunity to participate in activities that shape policy, as opposed to input for its own sake. A clear explanation of how one can get involved in shaping policy or how one can influence the decision, appears to be a piece that is missing. This piece is not now reflected in the way the comp plan public involvement is set up.

Marissa commented that staff are relying on the CCI to flesh out how the public involvement should influence policy making.

Ron concurred that people feel civic engagement has been successful when they feel they have had an impact. Basil expressed this point as when the public feels it has been allowed to have a voice.

Ron stated the next CCI comp plan meeting will cover the format of the public involvement chapter and include a discussion of policy. Basil agreed that a good format is essential to reaching consensus.

Stacy asked about the overall time line. She indicated that she preferred longer to extra meetings. The group concurred with holding longer meetings in order to deal with the development of comp plan public involvement policies.

## **5. Other Business/Announcements/Next Agenda**

Duane mentioned that the long-delayed development of revised by-laws would rely on email exchanges with the CCI as a whole.

Basil stated that he wished to take up in a future meeting how the list of organizations with contact details compiled by staff should be used. The CCI should give direction on how and when it is appropriate to use and give out the information.

Basil adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.

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